Missouri Department of Mental Health
Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

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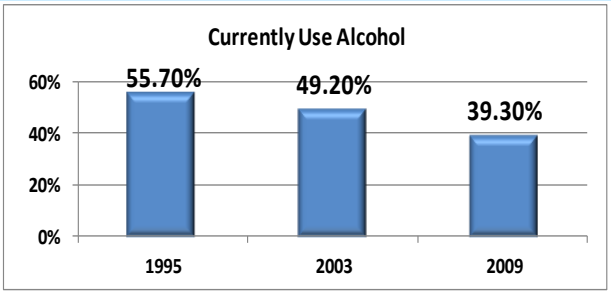
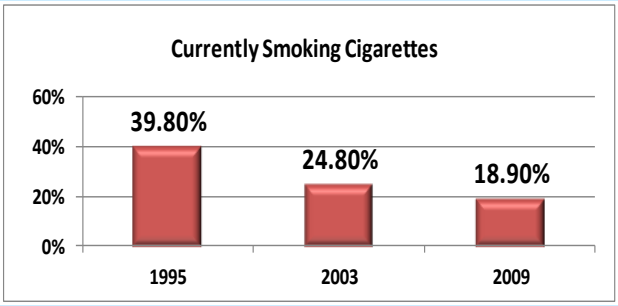
Some Positive Changes for Missouri High School Students

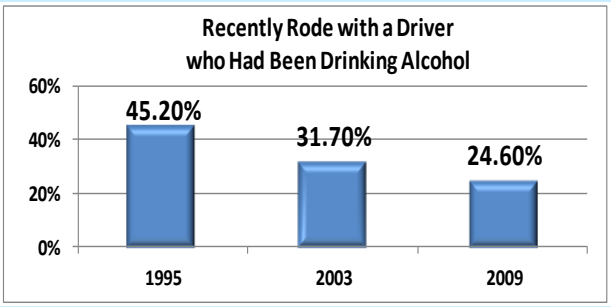
Currently using alcohol: About 40 percent of Missouri's high school students have used alcohol in the past 30 days. This is down from about 56 percent who reported current use in 1995.[1] Youth alcohol use is associated with academic and social problems, unintentional injuries, accidental deaths, physical fighting, and victimization. In addition, early use of alcohol increases the risk of developing dependency problems later in life.



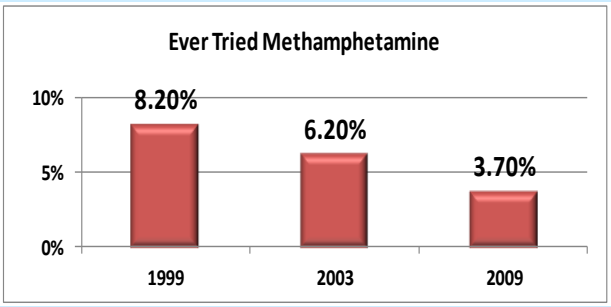
Currently smoking cigarettes: Over the past 14 years, the percent of high school smokers in Missouri has been cut in half. In 2009, about 19 percent of high school students reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days.[1] The most common type of cancer death in Missouri is lung cancer, and the majority of lung cancer deaths (80-90%) are attributable to cigarette smoking. Moreover, most people who smoke started smoking in their youth.



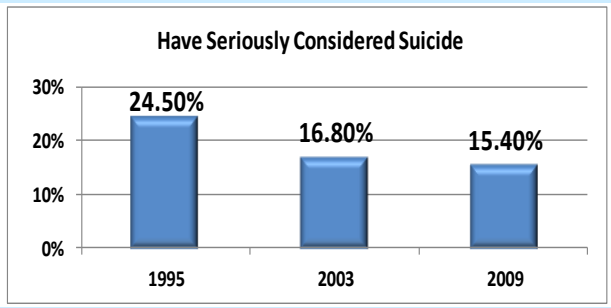
Recently rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol: The percent of Missouri high school students who report riding in vehicle who had been drinking alcohol is trending downward—from about 45 percent in 1995 to about 25 percent in 2009. Alcohol-impaired driving is a leading cause of motor vehicle fatality crashes. Survey data indicates that alcohol-impaired driving is still more common in Missouri than in most other states.[2]



Ever tried methamphetamine: A significantly lower percentage of Missouri high school students reported having ever tried methamphetamine in 2009 compared to that reported in 1999 (3.7% vs. 8.2%). Methamphetamine is a highly addictive substance that has commonly been produced in rural areas. Efforts continue in the state to limit access to the chemical ingredients used to manufacture the drug and to get methamphetamine users into treatment.



Have seriously considered suicide: In 2009, about 15 percent of Missouri high school students seriously considered suicide. While suicide is more common among older adults, suicide prevention is also important for at-risk youth. Risk factors include mental illness including depression, alcohol or drug abuse, a family history of suicide, impulsivity, and gender. Females are more likely to attempt suicide but males are more likely to die from suicide.



Source: [1]Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth Online: High School Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, 1995– 2009 Results. Retrieved at: http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Default.aspx?SID=HS.
[2]Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Vital Signs: Alcohol-Impaired Driving Among Adults—United States, 2010. MMWR 60:1351-1356.

For more information please contact the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse at (573)751-4942 or email: adamail@dmh.mo.gov